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MINISTRY OF LAW (Legislative Department)

New Delhi, the 16th September, 1958/Bhadra 25, 1880 (Saka)

The following Act of Parliament received the assent of the President on the 16th September, 1958, and is hereby published for general information:—

THE PUBLIC PREMISES (EVICTION OF UNAUTHORISED OCCUPANTS) ACT, 1958

No 32 OF 1958 .

[16th September, 1958]

An Act to provide for the eviction of unauthorised occupants from public premises and for certain incidental matters.

BE it enacted by Parliament in the Ninth Year of the Republic of India as follows:—

1. (1) This Act may be called the Public Premises (Eviction of Unauthorised Occupants) Act, 1958. Short title and extent.

(2) It extends to the whole of India.

2. In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires,—

(a) “estate officer” means an officer appointed as such by the Central Government under section 3;

Definitions.

(b) “public premises” means any premises belonging to, or taken on lease or requisitioned by, or on behalf of, the Central Government; and, in relation to the Union territory of Delhi, includes also—

(i) any premises belonging to the Municipal Corporation of Delhi or any municipal committee or notified area committee, and

(ii) any premises belonging to the Delhi Development Authority, whether such premises are in the possession of, or leased out by, the said Authority;

(c) "premises" means any land or any building or part of a building and includes,—

(i) the garden, grounds and out-houses, if any, appertaining to such building or part of a building, and

(ii) any fittings affixed to such building or part of a building for the more beneficial enjoyment thereof;

(d) "prescribed" means prescribed by rules made under this Act;

(e) "unauthorised occupation", in relation to any public premises, means the occupation by any person of the public premises without authority for such occupation, and includes the continuance in occupation by any person of the public premises after the authority (whether by way of grant or any other mode of transfer) under which he was allowed to occupy the premises has expired or has been determined for any reason whatsoever.

Appoint-
ment of
estate
officers.

3. The Central Government may, by notification in the Official Gazette,—

(a) appoint such persons, being gazetted officers of Government, as it thinks fit to be estate officers for the purposes of this Act; and

(b) define the local limits within which, or the categories of public premises in respect of which, each estate officer shall exercise the powers conferred, and perform the duties imposed, on estate officers by or under this Act.

Issue of
notice to
show cause
against order
of eviction.

4. (1) If the estate officer is of opinion that any persons are in unauthorised occupation of any public premises and that they should be evicted, the estate officer shall issue in the manner hereinafter provided a notice in writing calling upon all persons concerned to show cause why an order of eviction should not be made.

(2) The notice shall—

(a) specify the grounds on which the order of eviction is proposed to be made; and

(b) require all persons concerned, that is to say, all persons who are, or may be, in occupation of, or claim interest in, the public premises, to show cause, if any, against the proposed order on or before such date as is specified in the notice, being a date not earlier than ten days from the date of issue thereof.

(3) The estate officer shall cause the notice to be served by having it affixed on the outer door or some other conspicuous part of the public premises, and in such other manner as may be prescribed, whereupon the notice shall be deemed to have been duly given to all persons concerned.

(4) Where the estate officer knows or has reasons to believe that any persons are in occupation of the public premises, then, without prejudice to the provisions of sub-section (3), he shall cause a copy of the notice to be served on every such person by post or by delivering or tendering it to that person or in such other manner as may be prescribed.

5. (1) If, after considering the cause, if any, shown by any person in pursuance of a notice under section 4 and any evidence he may produce in support of the same and after giving him a reasonable opportunity of being heard, the estate officer is satisfied that the public premises are in unauthorised occupation, the estate officer may, on a date to be fixed for the purpose, make an order of eviction, for reasons to be recorded therein, directing that the public premises shall be vacated by all persons who may be in occupation thereof or any part thereof, and cause a copy of the order to be affixed on the outer door or some other conspicuous part of the public premises. Eviction of unauthorised occupants.

(2) If any person refuses or fails to comply with the order of eviction within forty-five days of the date of its publication under sub-section (1), the estate officer or any other officer duly authorised by the estate officer in this behalf may evict that person from, and take possession of, the public premises and may, for that purpose, use such force as may be necessary:

Provided that in the case of any such person who is not a Government employee and who has been in continuous occupation of the public premises for a period exceeding three years immediately preceding the date of the publication of the order of eviction, the estate officer shall not, if an application is made to him in this behalf, evict such person from the public premises within ninety days of such publication.

6. (1) Where any persons have been evicted from any public premises under section 5, the estate officer may, after giving fourteen days' notice to the persons from whom possession of the public premises has been taken and after publishing the notice in at least one newspaper having circulation in the locality, remove or cause to be removed or dispose of by public auction any property remaining on such premises. Disposal of property left on public premises by unauthorised occupants.

(2) Where any property is sold under sub-section (1), the sale proceeds shall, after deducting the expenses of the sale and the amount, if any, due to the Central Government on account of arrears of rent or damages, be paid to such person or persons as may appear to the estate officer to be entitled to the same:

Provided that where the estate officer is unable to decide as to the person or persons to whom the balance of the amount is payable or as to the apportionment of the same, he may refer such dispute to the civil court of competent jurisdiction and the decision of the court thereon shall be final.

Power to
recover rent
or damages
in respect of
public pre-
mises as
arrears of
land
revenue.

7. (1) Where any person is in arrears of rent payable in respect of any public premises, the estate officer may, by order, require that person to pay the same within such time and in such instalments as may be specified in the order.

(2) Where any person is, or has at any time been, in unauthorised occupation of any public premises, the estate officer may, having regard to such principles of assessment of damages as may be prescribed, assess the damages on account of the use and occupation of such premises and may, by order, require that person to pay the damages within such time and in such instalments as may be specified in the order:

Provided that no such order shall be made until after the issue of a notice in writing to the person calling upon him to show cause within such time as may be specified in the notice why such order should not be made, and until his objections, if any, and any evidence he may produce in support of the same, have been considered by the estate officer.

(3) If any person refuses or fails to pay the arrears of rent or any instalment thereof payable under sub-section (1) or the damages or any instalment thereof payable under sub-section (2) within the time specified in the order relating thereto, the estate officer may issue a certificate for the amount due to the Collector who shall proceed to recover the same as an arrear of land revenue.

Power of
estate
officers.

8. An estate officer shall, for the purpose of holding any inquiry under this Act, have the same powers as are vested in a civil court under the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908, when trying a suit, in respect of the following matters, namely:—

- (a) summoning and enforcing the attendance of any person and examining him on oath;
- (b) requiring the discovery and production of documents;
- (c) any other matter which may be prescribed.

9. (1) An appeal shall lie from every order of the estate officer Appeals. made in respect of any public premises under section 5 or section 7 to an appellate officer who shall be the district judge of the district in which the public premises are situate or such other judicial officer in that district of not less than ten years' standing as the district judge may designate in this behalf.

(2) An appeal under sub-section (1) shall be preferred--

(a) in the case of an appeal from an order under section 5, within thirty days from the date of publication of the order under sub-section (1) of that section; and

(b) in the case of an appeal from an order under section 7, within thirty days from the date on which the order is communicated to the appellant;

Provided that the appellate officer may entertain the appeal after the expiry of the said period of thirty days, if he is satisfied that the appellant was prevented by sufficient cause from filing the appeal in time.

(3) Where an appeal is preferred from an order of the estate officer, the appellate officer may stay the enforcement of that order for such period and on such conditions as he deems fit.

(4) Every appeal under this section shall be disposed of by the appellate officer as expeditiously as possible.

(5) For the purposes of this section, a presidency town shall be deemed to be a district and the chief judge or the principal judge of the city civil court therein shall be deemed to be the district judge of the district.

10. Save as otherwise expressly provided in this Act, every order made by an estate officer or appellate officer under this Act shall be final and shall not be called in question in any original suit, application or execution proceeding. Finality of orders.

11. No suit, prosecution or other legal proceeding shall lie against the Central Government or the appellate officer or the estate officer in respect of anything which is in good faith done or intended to be done in pursuance of this Act or of any rules or orders made thereunder. Protection of action taken in good faith.

12. The Central Government may, by notification in the Official Gazette, direct that any power exercisable by it under this Act shall, subject to such conditions, if any, as may be specified in the notification, be exercisable also by a State Government or an officer of the State Government. Delegation of powers.

Power to
make rules

13. (1) The Central Government may, by notification in the Official Gazette, make rules for carrying out the purposes of this Act.

(2) In particular, and without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing power, such rules may provide for all or any of the following matters, namely:—

(a) the form of any notice required or authorised to be given under this Act and the manner in which it may be served;

(b) the holding of inquiries under this Act;

(c) the procedure to be followed in taking possession of public premises;

(d) the manner in which damages for unauthorised occupation may be assessed and the principles which may be taken into account in assessing such damages;

(e) the manner in which appeals may be preferred and the procedure to be followed in appeals;

(f) any other matter which has to be, or may be, prescribed.

(3) All rules made under this section shall, as soon as may be after they are made, be laid for not less than thirty days before each House of Parliament and shall be subject to such modifications as Parliament may make during the session in which they are so laid or the session immediately following.

Repeal.

14. The Public Premises (Eviction) Act, 1950, is hereby repealed. 27 of 1950

G. R. RAJAGOPAUL,
Secy. to the Govt. of India.